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Macro-Regional Innovation Week

At the crossroads of three European Macro-Regions: Danube, Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine Regions

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AREA SCIENCE PARK

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Introduction

The objective of the Macro-Regional Innovation Week organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and Trieste AREA Science Park was to examine the best way to support the development of a competitive innovation ecosystem across the macro-regions that are relevant because of significant historical and economic ties and because of their inclusion in overlapping European macro-regional strategies.

With more than 200 participants, including 75 speakers, mobilising the best expertise in Europe on the subjects, representing local and international policy and decision makers, academics, financial actors and various types of innovation and technology transfer practitioners, the 5-days long Innovation Week focused on facilitating the exchange of views, knowledge and best practices among the relevant stakeholders and looked at different levels of governance with the objective to develop a community of young practitioners which shall contribute to the spreading of innovation culture in the countries concerned.

The week opened with an initial consideration of the political imperatives that need to be attained to support the expansion of a robust innovation and technology commercialisation ecosystem. It then moved on to consider how framework conditions supporting innovation and technology commercialisation can be created at a regional level by applying robust Smart Specialisation Strategies. The role of Science and Technology parks, how best to structure their operation and their interaction with local stakeholders was the focus of a dedicated portion of the forum. The second part of the forum focused on the human capital component of innovation ecosystems through targeted training aimed at addressing a recognised skills gap in the domains of technology transfer, intellectual property management and marketing and the commercialisation of research results more in general.

The city of Trieste was chosen because of its location at the intersection between three macro-regions and the presence of Italy's largest and oldest science park. It is a centre of excellence in the field of research, science and technology, an innovation ecosystem at the crossroad of three European macro-regions: Danube, Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine.

Acknowledgements

The Macro-Regional Innovation Week is organised together with the AREA Science Park and in collaboration with the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), Elettra-Sincrotrone, the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

AREA Science Park is operational since 1982 and is founded to provide a link between the business community and high-level international scientific institutions in Trieste. It is today most important multi-sector science park in Italy (and in Europe) with 23,000 m2 of laboratories with specialised equipment, offices and service facilities.

AREA Science Park, a national benchmark for transfer of technology and the promotion of innovation is a prestigious multi-sectoral Science and Technology Park where research, development and innovation have provided significant steps forward. AREA provides support services for the development of activities based upon knowledge management and technology transfer. It also plays an intermediary role within the engagement in commercialisation efforts and partnerships. AREA has a long-standing experience of fruitful collaboration with partners from Eastern Europe in the framework of EU-funded projects involving innovation stakeholders and economic operators, aiming at supporting the development of regional innovation systems, increasing business competitiveness by means of technology and know-how transfer and exchanging innovation management tools and techniques.

We would like to thank very warmly all participants and speakers of the Innovation Week and the students and trainees in Trieste who have contributed to drafting the reports of the various technical sessions that served as a basis for this final report.

In conclusion, we hope that this report will be perceived by all those who participated as a fruitful rendition of the work performed together.

Joint Research Centre

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) is the Scientific and Technical arm of the European Commission and its mission is to support EU policy development by providing sound and impartial scientific advice.

The JRC is supporting EU cohesion policies - such as macro-regional and regional development, pre-accession and enlargement - with a set of instruments and competences including a smart specialisation platform, research and innovation monitoring and training on intellectual property and technology transfer.

The JRC Directorate Competences aspires to put on centre stage and under the same roof a set of practical competences and experiences that have been developed and matured within the JRC.

Two JRC units have contributed to the organisation of the Macro-Regional Innovation Week in the framework of the JRC's Enlargement and Integration Action: Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Unit with specific competences in the domains of innovation management and in particular on matters related to technology commercialisation and technology transfer and intellectual property, and the Interinstitutional, International Relations and Outreach Unit which is coordinating, among other, all JRC activities in support of macro-regional strategies.

1 Opening Session

The Macro-Regional Innovation Week was opened by the JRC Director-Competences, Mr **Giovanni De Santi** together with the President of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Ms **Debora Serracchiani**, the Secretary General of the Central European Initiative (CEI), Ambassador **Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri** and Mr **Sergio Paoletti,** President of AREA Science Park. Two regional ministers responsible for research and innovation gave keynote speeches, namely Mr **Patrizio Bianchi** (Emilia Romagna) and Ms **Loredana Pannariti** (Friuli Venezia Giulia), as well as the representative from the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms **Alessandra Pastorelli.**

Opening the Innovation Week, Mr **De Santi** stressed out the increasing heterogeneities between the various members of the Union which have resulted, over the last few years, in an increase on the emphasis placed on Macro-Regional Strategies targeting specific subsets of EU member states which can apply also to the Western Balkan countries. This conjugates well with the increasing recognition that **local eco-systems are of pivotal importance in discussions about Innovation**.

Mr De Santi expressed expectations that the Innovation Week will become a **milestone event for European technology transfer** stakeholders and practitioners and that the value added generated by the increased knowledge, experience and networks will directly contribute to our common goal of making Europe a global leader in not only science and research, but also in innovation and entrepreneurship. He passed the message to participants that the Innovation Week should be a landmark in their attempts to learn about best practice in innovation and in putting their skills at the service of their respective countries and regions.

The fruitful discussion among all speakers led to the few important takeaways.

As the traditional innovation paradigm is redefined, through a move towards open innovation, the importance and relevance of local innovation ecosystems increases dramatically together with the need to consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges that specific eco-systems need to harness and confront.

Transferring new technologies from laboratory to market is very challenging without an adequate local innovation system, however, it also remains one of the most effective tools for generating local social and economic impact.

While technology and knowledge transfer activities have not been considered primary activities of universities and research centres, the importance of these is growing as we enter an era of **citizens-led science** and end-user based markets and all stakeholders, including governments, have a role to play in ensuring these activities are encouraged and supported.

The Macro-Regional Innovation Week recognises the important contribution that macro-regional strategies can make to innovation and intends to cover issues of relevance to three overlapping / contiguous macro-regions, with the hope of facilitating the exchange of best practices and of galvanising collaborative initiatives across regions.

The Innovation Week can be considered as a **starting point in the JRC support to the Berlin Process for the Western Balkans**, which Italy is chairing in 2017.

1.1 EU and the regions of innovation

The session covered best practices and achievements in regional innovation strategies, instruments and management and interregional cooperation. The participants were invited to focus on the best practices and achievements obtained in the multilevel policies and strategies of innovation.

Challenges to face in the innovation process were debated:

- not enough investments in research and development (R&D),
- decrease of innovation activities in small and medium enterprises (SMEs),
- low level of citizens' commitment to innovation.

To solve these difficulties, the following ingredients should be combined to drive innovation development:

- **technology,**
- **markets regulation and**
- **people skills.**

These three dimensions will create together a **strong innovation eco-system**, in which different stakeholders (large companies, innovative start-ups, universities) should be involved. This concept should be applied also across different regions, at a **macro-regional level**, to join forces and drive cooperation built on complementary strengths, with the support of different tools, such as Smart Specialisation Platforms.

The importance of putting in practice European innovation strategies was stressed out. Some given examples are the "the Covenant of Mayors" which is committed to implementing EU climate and energy objectives on territories, or "Health2020", the European policy for health and well-being.

Demographic growth, scarcity of resources, disparities and inequality, climate change are some of the megatrends occurring nowadays. To address these global issues, a **new approach of policy making** should be developed, mixing together political, economic, social and environmental aspects. In this perspective, key drivers should be considered to come up with a policy based on four integrated dimensions: **regional innovation, people rights and resources.**

Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) region served as a study case during the discussion. The presence of many research and scientific centres of excellence in the FVG region, that are coordinated through an agreement recently redefined by the FVG region, the Ministry of Education, University and Research and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation was outlined. The aim of this common action is to invest in a new organisational model of the regional innovation system in order to ensure collaborations and skills development. The implementation of the network between universities and (inter)national research institutions requires also the strengthening of the attractiveness and competitiveness of these institutions. Some of results that can be achieved through a series of activities could be better use of infrastructures, development of international agreements within the macro-regional areas, attraction of young researchers etc.

The results of the **Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)**[1] commissioned survey of business sentiment in South East Europe (SEE) on crucial economic and development issues (Balkan Barometer) were presented. Key challenges emerging from the survey are:

- low investments in R&D,
- low impact of R&D,
- only 50% of all businesses engaged in innovation processes,
- **weak links between the private sector and research institutions**, with the exception of largest trade oriented companies more focused on cooperation with universities.

A forthcoming communication on the progress of the macro-regions was announced and the governance challenge was pointed out as one of the main issues.

During the round table discussion, the participants raised the following needs:

- to consider the possible inclusion of specific **instruments dedicated to macro regions** in the next multi-annual financial framework starting in 2020,
- **inclusion of social and community innovation** in the R&I strategies and
- the set-up of a horizontal **group on innovation with representatives from all four macro-regions**.

[1] Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) focuses on promotion and enhancement of regional cooperation in South East Europe (SEE) and on development of the regional growth strategy SEE 2020 to boost prosperity and job creation

2 Smart Specialisation, Unlocking the Potential of Regional Innovation – JRC Tutorial Session

The JRC's Growth & Innovation Unit gave a JRC tutorial session on **Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3)** with the presentation of best practices from concerned region and from the perspective of the World Bank. A large part of the debate was on how RIS3 can realise its potential, the set-up of thematic platforms and the challenges for RIS3 at the macro regional level.

2.1 Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) for Innovation and Growth

Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) is an intelligent form of innovation policy but there are still important **challenges** to tackle: **inclusiveness, sustainability issue and competitiveness**. S3 is now encouraging best investing capital and the creation of an innovation strategy in the countries by:

- investing public strategy,
- creation and circulation of knowledge,
- increase the effect of digitalisation of economy,
- provide the skills to work in a globalised system,
- government implementation of S3, attention to education, research and industrial policy.

Other fundamental points are:

- credibility of strategy: ensure that the research has a business innovation policy to be transformed in actions,
- evaluation of policy and programmes of S3: public intervention, resources innovation,
- diversity issue and need for implementation of common terms and languages.

If the challenges are tackled in the right way, RIS3 could realise its potential, improve the effectiveness of research and innovation policies, spur regional development and economic transformation.

However, the challenges for the implementations are:

- flexibility and adaptability,
- monitoring and evaluation: creation of intermediate goals and monitor the signs of difficulty,
- strategic piloting with sound governance.

Concrete projects in Romania, Croatia and Poland were presented as a result of competitive assessment and Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP).

A showcase of **Croatia** demonstrated that the major challenges and obstacles are inadequate research infrastructures, weak RDI capabilities of business sector, difficult access to capital market, insufficient commercialisation of research, the low number of workers in R&D activities in private sector (only 2500 workers, 19% of total).

2.2 Smart stories: S3 from design to Implementation - smart specialisation in the current socio-economic context

The goals of the Smart Specialisation Strategy were explained and discussed, as well as how the S3 is developing in the countries that have accepted it. Again, **the importance of innovative process** was stressed, as S3 is leverage for additional funding: it triggers for change in innovation policies and it supports cooperation. This naturally leads to an increasing interest in S3 for its political impact. At present, the Smart Specialisation platform includes 177 regions and 20 countries around Europe.

Austria's Lead Institutions Initiative, a policy strategy aimed at promoting cooperation between universities in the context of Smart Specialisation, was given as an example. Austria is a small country and needed to adopt a diversified approach compared to other countries. 22 public universities joined the Initiative in order to enhance cooperation and contribute to innovation. Another main goal of the Austrian government in this context was to strengthen the triple helix: knowledge, enterprise and government sector.

The presentation of the **S3 implementation in Slovenia** showed the importance of the business sector role in promoting collaboration, cooperation and internalisation, as well in the definition of the priorities that have to be developed in order to change the policy and facilitate the implementation. Bringing together companies, research organisations and the state creates long term partnerships and makes the nation stronger in the global market.

In the Italian region **Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG)** the attention has been focused on the identification of 5 areas of regional specialisation (agri-food, strategic production chains, maritime technologies, smart health). For each of them, specific development trajectories have been defined. A four-step process for building and implementing the S3 in FVG was established: creation of an Internal Organisation Model, Entrepreneurial Discovery, set

up a Participative Governance Model, and finally Governance and Implementation of the strategy.

Experience with S3 in Serbia, in particular in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, showed that resolving serious economic problems and accelerating economic growth could be achieved through innovation, not only at a regional but also at a national level. In this case, the methodology is based on the enhancement of the innovation process through implementation of **cross-border cooperation and knowledge transfer**. In this context, the drivers of the innovation process should be the enterprises and the scientific and research organisations.

2.3 S3 and Value Chains – Thematic S3 Platforms vs. Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Smart Specialisation Investments

Explanation of **thematic S3 platforms, value chain approach and operationalisation** were presented to the audience. The value chains approach, as a policy framework for integration is aiming at facilitating the combination of intermediary inputs to produce solutions and investments.

The successful story of the **Vanguard Initiative** was highlighted during the discussion. The Vanguard Initiative is a coalition of European regions committed to help regional clusters to get international, ease connections between research institutions and companies, support start-ups and SMEs, and more generally to enhance the territories' growth. It is pioneering a new approach to create **inter-regional smart specialisation platforms**, through a 4-steps methodology: **learn, connect, demonstrate and commercialise**. This new methodology is being tested on five pilots that are industry-driven in specific key enabling technologies, and in order to identify the value chain.

A **regional platform ASTER** is exploiting the ecosystem (75 organisations) and it developed the investment strategy on 5 vertical specialisation areas and 4 horizontal drivers, keeping a constant monitoring and focusing on **implementation and evolution.** In order to move from platforms to value chains it was then essential to increase proximity to the market, have a collaborative system and increase the companies' presence.

The future of industry and manufacturing lies in dynamic processes and networks where complex communication and automation will be essential to move toward the **Industry 4.0 and 'smart factories'**, with individualised mass production and mutual communication between machines. However, there are several barriers, such as security and data protection, staff competences and, not less important, the **courage to introduce changes**.

2.4 Towards macro-regional S3

How a macro-regional system can improve innovation and how it can allow the countries involved to share their knowledge, to compare their technological innovations and to learn a lot from each other? Discussion around the experiences from the three existing macro-regions, gave some useful insights.

The **EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)** is founded on three big policy areas: economic growth and innovation, mobility and connectivity, environment and energy. This new Strategy is still working on the integration of the S3 concept and focusing on the innovation landscape. In particular, the social innovation that could be a tool to overcome competition and to promote cooperation in order to get benefits for the society generates a lot of interest.

The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) method for the implementation of S3 is done through thematic scopes: blue growth, connectivity, environment quality and sustainable tourism.

Innovation depends on territorial capital and on the local features of the region in question. The experience of EUSAIR is that macro-regional cooperation could be a way to open new markets, increasing social prosperity and economic growth.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) aims to address common challenges and to share opportunities. EUSDR Priority Area 7 focuses on the development of the research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation in all Danube countries (or their regions) by 2020. To achieve this goal the crucial is to communicate with countries that have not yet developed strategies themselves.

3 Science Parks and Areas of Innovation

3.1 Enabling technologies shaping the future of innovation

During this session the **innovation was presented as a revolution and not an evolution**.

Technology is transforming the world and our lives with 3 important instruments: the internet, the cloud computing solution and the new machine learning technology. The way we work also changed following the development of technology: in the past information was expensive and difficult to share; now we can see a change in the company organisation and business – the work can happen everywhere, every time, it became global and connects people all over the world. Another recent revolution is the increasing of the number of different devices that are all connected. We now live in a society that requires new tools, devices and processes. The **organisations and companies need a new type of innovation**, based on the sharing of ideas and on active engagement.

3.2 Science and Technology Parks – Open Innovation Strategies in the 21st century

The role and importance of Science, Technology and Research Parks (STPs) were at the centre of discussion during this session. The **key issues of a science park** are:

- innovation,
- promotion of competitiveness of resident companies,
- facilitation of a good flow of knowledge

STPs play a **key role in the economic development** of their environment as they create new markets, new customers, new companies and new collaboration opportunities between companies. The **priorities of STPs** are mainly business and innovation, but also knowledge, science and technology. Moreover, one important target of STPs is to facilitate the collaboration between the resident companies and the universities.

The **building blocks of STPs** are:

- management,
- collaboration with universities,
- value-added services,
- quality facilities,
- new business creation,
- business attraction,
- networking,
- territorial influence.

In planning science parks we have to keep in mind some key strategic decisions about location and environment, position in the technology stream, target firms, degree of specialisation, target markets, networking and management model.

Open innovation and industrial challenges in STPs were also discussed. The focus was initially on internal innovation: creating new markets and new opportunities we can obtain customers' satisfaction with new products or services. If knowledge and technology management is done well during this process, then all users will benefit from sharing of innovation systems.

The **Open Innovation tool kit** is essential to connect external technologies, for example from the universities, with internal knowledge, in order to promote local development. It is also important to attract innovators to new challenges that are viewed as opportunities for developing new technologies in order to create growth.

The case of the **Thessaloniki Technology Park** showed that a STP can be a response to the growing need for an efficient and dynamic organisation that would promote innovation, competitiveness and entrepreneurship, as it was the case for the Greek enterprises. In this specific case, paradoxically, the Greek economic crisis influenced the growth and unexpectedly helped creation of new start-ups and incubators as source of employment.

Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (STP/AoI) are like airports, or hub, or Christmas trees. They are physical gathering spaces which favour the creation of connections between people, projects, investors, SMEs, scouters. A **successful eco-system based on the triple helix** interlacement (university, industry, government), should be based on co-innovation, cross,-innovation, co-financing, and also ensure the society's presence and involvement in the STP/AoI. This is the purpose of Open Innovation 2.0.

STPs play a **key role in the economic development** of their environment as they create new markets, new customers, new companies and new collaboration opportunities between companies.

To **ensure creating innovation beyond the triple helix you have to bridge the gap between people, technology and money**. The presence of an ecosystem is boosting all these components and creating a favourable environment for their development. Ecosystems are essential to add technological value, market value and management value, provided that these values move together.

3.3 Campus – the importance of proximity in a Science and Technology Park

The **Carinthia, Lakeside Science & Technology Park** in Austria was presented as a good example of an STP that is the central place for interdisciplinary research and development, with platform for education and enterprise. The main focus of the companies in the Park is cooperation.

The first **Science Technology Park in Belgrade**, Serbia was built only in 2015 and is focused on innovation for competitiveness and technology development. With the main objectives being development of the technology sector, education, export, growth and globalisation, this STP managed to create partnerships across institutions, adjust to local conditions and capacity of buildings. They also realised a growing tech company program and a start-up program with the support of an incubator.

The **Technology Park in Ljubljana**, established in 1993 is in the proximity of world class science, has access to talents and entrepreneurial culture and provides appropriate business support. The Park is a place for business, science and education and has different facilities, it provides support services for start-up and development policies.

The **International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)** is an international non-profit research organisation established in 1994 in AREA Science Park that now counts over 60 member states. Biotechnology is essential for human health, agriculture, environment and energy and is a field with high potential and economic value. However, the biopharmaceutical sector needs a specific approach ans as the case of ICGEB shows, depending on sectors, STPs require different business models and financial strategies.

3.4 Business Creation – Incubation & Acceleration

The **i4G incubator** is a public initiative with a bottom-up approach, based in Thessaloniki. This incubator works as a support organisation with a very extrovert asset, trying to enhance international collaborations and entrepreneurship. Starting from this concrete example, it was demonstrated **what EU is doing to support SMEs and start-up**, **compared to national initiatives and global ecosystems**. The important part in accelerating a business is to always work toward exceptional standards.

To **ensure creating innovation beyond the triple helix you have to bridge the gap between people, technology and money**. The presence of an ecosystem is boosting all these components and creating a favourable environment for their development. Each component of the helix has a different weight and involvement at the different steps of a business growth. **Innovation is speed**, meaning we have to always count the fast pace of technology when making business.

Main differences between an incubator and an accelerator were mentioned as well as the example of a global innovation management consulting group of the **Oxford University Innovation** and its way of fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. To run a successful incubator you have to design it appropriately on the specific case analysing the local context and adapting to it.

4 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

4.1 Scene setting

The main goal of this session is to create a regional pool of IP professionals with particular skills in the areas of knowledge transfer and IP commercialisation.

Along the methods of IP managing, IP marketing and the best partners, the challenges for technology managers, as they have to preserve knowledge and satisfy the society at the same time, were presented.

IP commercialisation is crucial for technology transfer as it brings knowledge to the market for the benefit of the society. There are mainly three ways to do that:

- **assignment of IP,**
- **licensing of IP and**
- **establishment of spin-offs or start-ups.**

The success of IP commercialisation is not related to the number of licenses that are patented and to the money they yield, but to the benefit they provide to the society thanks to the **knowledge dissemination**. There are many models of IP management and there is no model that fits all countries. Therefore, a tailor made approach is necessary for each specific region in order to take the correct strategic decision.

The role of IP is to change the value of technologies: when they are protected they are more valuable than before. The problem now is that there is a lack of an adequate human capital with skills to manage IP in the most strategic way. Therefore, the creation of a model for the development of specific human capital according to a specific region's needs is a must.

4.2 Theme I: Academic IP Commercialisation

Knowledge transfer models that can be applied in universities were presented during this session. **IP professionals have to understand both business and technology of IP management**, so they can use IP to create **public value**. To achieve these goals, public research groups must have intellectual rights and intellectuals property skills. Moreover, the innovation office must have a proactive role in the research group. In this way, the academic environment could make knowledge available to the public. Incubators and science parks would be involved in this scheme in order to support universities. This is one of the most important scientific challenges for universities and we cannot do it without IP management experts.

Four **models for knowledge transfer**:

- **the licensing model,**
- **the collaboration model,**
- **the venture creation model and**
- **the Intellectual Asset Management (IAM) model.**

their features and methods were clearly described, with a particular attention to the last one, which involves a proactive responsibility to help the researchers in all steps, from the public domain to the connection with stakeholders and contractual network.

The application of the IAM model in universities is based on four targets:

- capture: understanding of the research results,
- position: realising what we are offering in relation to the market,
- utilise: communicating the plan of the project,
- organise: thinking how to develop the project.

At the core of IAM model is to make intangibles more manageable. As a matter of fact, through IP assets and knowledge assets we can convert research results from unspecified, diffuse and scattered knowledge to well-defined and manageable intellectual assets. IPR makes research results possible to be managed and more explicit for societal stakeholders, creating a public value.

All the participant took part in a **creative workshop**. Working in small teams, set up by representatives of different universities and countries, they discussed about the common needs of academic institutions belonging to a hypothetical macro-region and about the steps to follow to initiate its technology transfer service, proposed possible policies and strategies to improve knowledge transfer and IP commercialisation in their countries.

4.3 Theme II: IP marketing

The first step in **IP marketing**, the so called "diagnostic phase" which is evaluation of the quality of inventions and is fundamental to define the marketing potential of an IP was central topic of this session. This phase allows assessing the transferability readiness and checking the quality of one's existing patents.

The first step in the marketing process is to check the quality of the patterns. Then, patents have to be rated by quality and the score is based on the market impact, the legal aspect and the technical impact. This process leads to the calculation of

predictive indicators. The determination of the quality of technology is crucial, as it allows having a direct economic impact of the invention itself. The last phase is the marketing of the invention.

The following general **recommendations for Technology Transfer management** were given:

- preparing yourself and your organisation for a TT: create a team with different skills and prepare them about the project.
- project manager ideal profile and tasks: select a trained project leader with professional skills in both sciences and IP legal aspects and partnership spirit.
- main pitfalls and tricks to speed-up the TT process.

Once the team is prepared and ready to start, the potential partners (buyers, licensees) have to be identified. There are two methods for the identification of potential partners that can also be combined: the traditional one and the analysis by new tools that allows the identification of potential buyers by a potent mapping mechanism. It is a powerful approach that takes advantage of potent database to create a map of existing patents of interest and to position an invention among all existing ones.

The last step in the identification of potential partners is the gap analysis – the analysis of partners in order to select the best one.

When the partner is selected, it is important to prepare the contact in order to manage a successful relationship. The first contact with the partner is critical. The "homework" must be done in order to anticipate questions from the partner and define all the needs and the alternative options.

The professionalism is critical in this process and preparation is the key. Some **tricks that could help during the negotiation process** with a potential partner:

- there must be only one leader during the negotiation process,
- think about a message to reassure the other party about your intentions,
- anticipate conflict by providing solutions,
- send the first draft of contract,
- reciprocal respect and
- do not leave with unanswered questions.

4.4 Theme III: IP Valuation in the Commercialisation Phase of the Research Results and Services

The participants assembled in small groups to carry out a **practical exercise** in which they were invited to discuss and propose a **strategy to manage IP** in a specific case related to the TTO of a non-profit organisation.

The session was concluded with a **set of guidelines** for the valuation of intangibles and on constructing the price of a technology in IP licensing negotiations. The value of an IP depends on many elements and must be distinguished from the price of the technology itself. To determine the value of an IP one has to look at the potential benefit of an asset in the future and to consider the risk that concerns both the technical side and the market side, as it is possible that someone has a similar technology. Moreover, the time needed to bring the technology to the market is also important to determine its value. IP valuation is a subjective process that depends on experience.

5 Smart Specialization Strategies Support to Rural Development: Introducing Innovation in Rural Economy

5.1 Rural development programmes and research: Smart Specialisation Strategies and rural development

The interaction between rural development methodologies and innovation processes and products is part of the new European guidelines for the "rural development" sector. This indication focuses particularly the agro-food sector (but not only) and the introduction and use of new technologies in the rural world.

Agriculture, agro-industry as well as other segments of the rural economy (like tourism) are an important component in terms of volumes and occupation of the European economies. The value added such activities produce, which by definition is mainly linked to innovation, lays far below the available technologies and R&D capacities.

Besides the operational tools introduced by the European Commission in the development and management of the Common Agriculture Policy, many opportunities to innovate are available for the economic operators and are broadly underexplored.

The dialogue between science and rural activities has a great potential for economic development and represents one fundamental component of the societal challenges linked to climate change mitigation and environmental protection as well as to population health and wellbeing.

In recognising its importance and transversal impact, many regions across the EU have included agro-food and tourism among their Smart Specialisation priority sectors.

The session aimed at exploring the opportunities of integration among policy instruments (RIS3), funding programmes (ERDF, RDPs), innovation actors (science and technology parks, research institutions) and rural development actors (LAGs).

5.2 Interaction between innovation and rural development in the framework of the pre-accession countries

AREA Science Park and the LAG Carso – Kras are in a phase of testing an pilot innovative approach to rural development by organising dialogue spaces between science, innovative companies (residents of AREA Science Park) and the economic actors of the Carso – Kars area at the aim of promoting the introduction of innovations able to improve the value added of rural economy products and services.

Such activities have been integrated into the Rural Development Programme of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region thanks to a bottom-up and integration oriented approach in the elaboration of the Local Development Plan of the LAG Carso – Kras where the projects of rural economic actors are stimulated to partnership with high-technology and R&D companies.

The session focused on catching an overview of the state of the art of the programmes for agriculture development in the pre-accession countries and envisaged potential applications of such methodology to these regions as well as on the existing or programmed plans for linking innovation to the rural economy.

5.3 New technologies in agribusiness support: societal challenges and climate change

The session, devoted to the identification of initiatives, projects, methodologies and innovative technologies in the field of rural development (in general) and agribusiness (in particular) focused on:

- best practices on using new technologies in the agricultural and agro-food sector, also in light of climate change,
- new methodologies in the marketing sector and financial support to small rural enterprises.

5.4 Round Table: the voice of the Local Action Groups: integration of innovation in local development strategies.

The round table opened with a brief overview of local development strategies of the LAG Karst (Italy) and the LAG Istria (Slovenia) and it was followed by a proposal for the development of a framework for a joint project aiming at introducing innovative methodologies and tool in the rural development in the Adriatic area including the establishment of a network of rural development actors, research centres and technology parks focused on an exchange of know-how and technical assistance activities.

The round table produced a first benchmark of priorities in the Rural Development Programmes of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Albania and Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, aiming at cross-checking the areas of parallel interest and complementarity.

6 Conclusion

Innovation is not a phenomenon that occurs in a vacuum, it is intimately linked to local conditions and eco-systems and one of its key drivers is the complex interaction between the economic, scientific, academic, human and intellectual capital stock of a given area or region.

The Innovation Week addressed strategic political issues, as well as different facets of the innovation policy, from smart specialisation to science park development, from technology transfer to management of intellectual property assets.

"*Innovation needs cooperation*", "*human being must be considered at the centre of the process of innovation*", "innovation ecosystem is regional, rather than European", "*local eco-systems are of pivotal importance in discussions about innovation*"… are some of the very important messages heard during these five days of intense and constructive discussions, along with some criticisms, recommendations and compliments.

One can say that the **major innovation in the European territorial cooperation are macro-regional strategies**. To build on the potential, it is necessary to **support the connection and integration of existing macro-regional strategies**, developing a stronger cohesion and fostering the creation of a future macro-regional smart specialisation strategy.

To make macro-regional strategies more connected and effective, it is important to exchange data and best practices in a more systematic approach to put forward ideas and projects that meet the real expectations and needs of the population. Territories need to put together investors, academia experts, enterprises and regional institutions to create more profitable and effective solutions and to shift the focus of their future strategies towards citizens.

The Innovation Week can be regarded as a promising step forward in fostering innovation culture in the target countries and should be a **milestone event for European technology transfer** stakeholders and practitioners. The added value generated by the increased knowledge, experience and networks will directly contribute to our common goal of **making Europe a global leader in not only science and research, but also in innovation and entrepreneurship**.

7 Annex – Results of the online feedback questionnaire

Number of respondents: 42

Questions:

Q1: From which country do you come from?

Q2: How did you learn about the Innovation Week?

Q3: Overall, how would you rate the Innovation Week?

Q4: What is your opinion on the general organisation and the quality of the facilities of the Innovation Week?

Q5: What do you think of the overall quality of the speakers?

Q6: How helpful and applicable to your job was the content presented at Innovation Week?

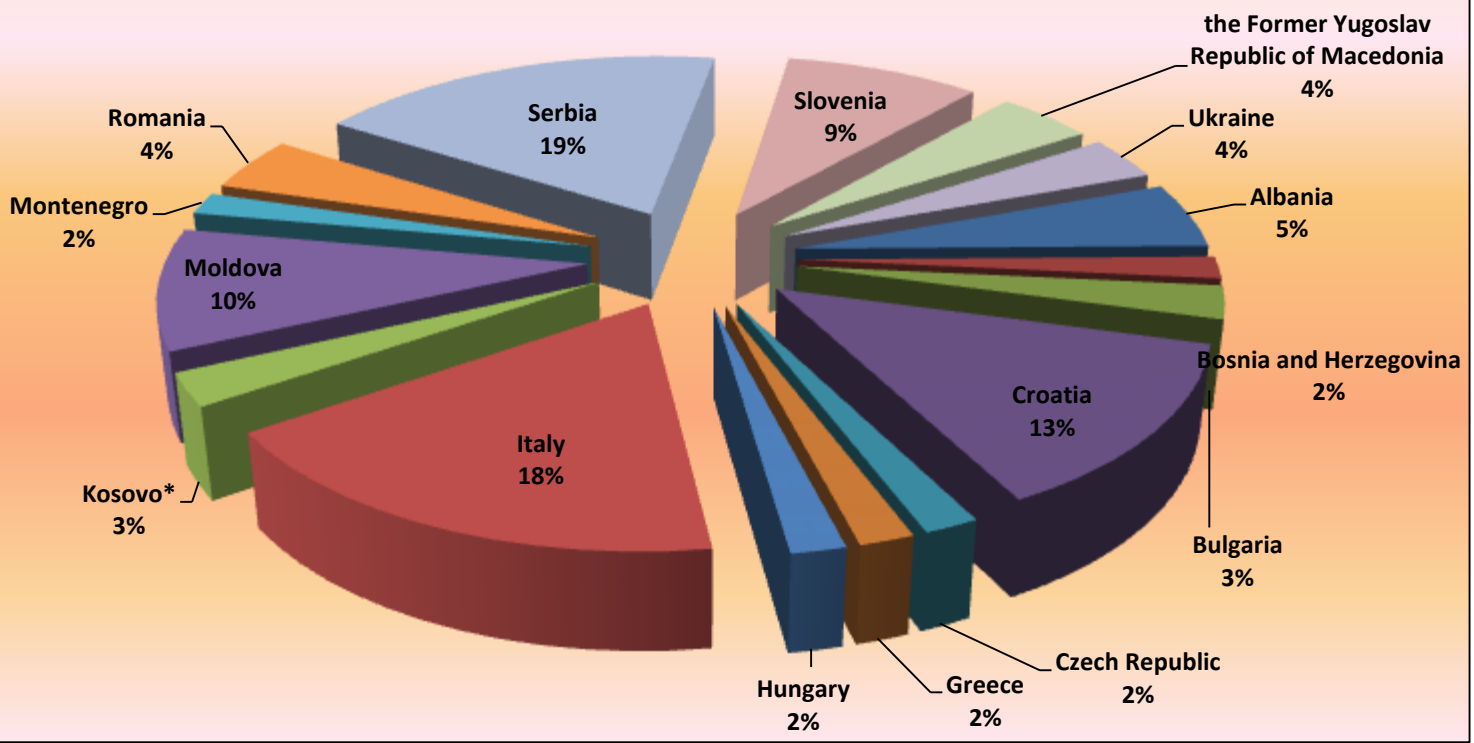
Q7: Please order the session from the most interesting (1) to the least interesting (6)?

Q8: What was the single most valuable thing you learned at the Innovation Week?

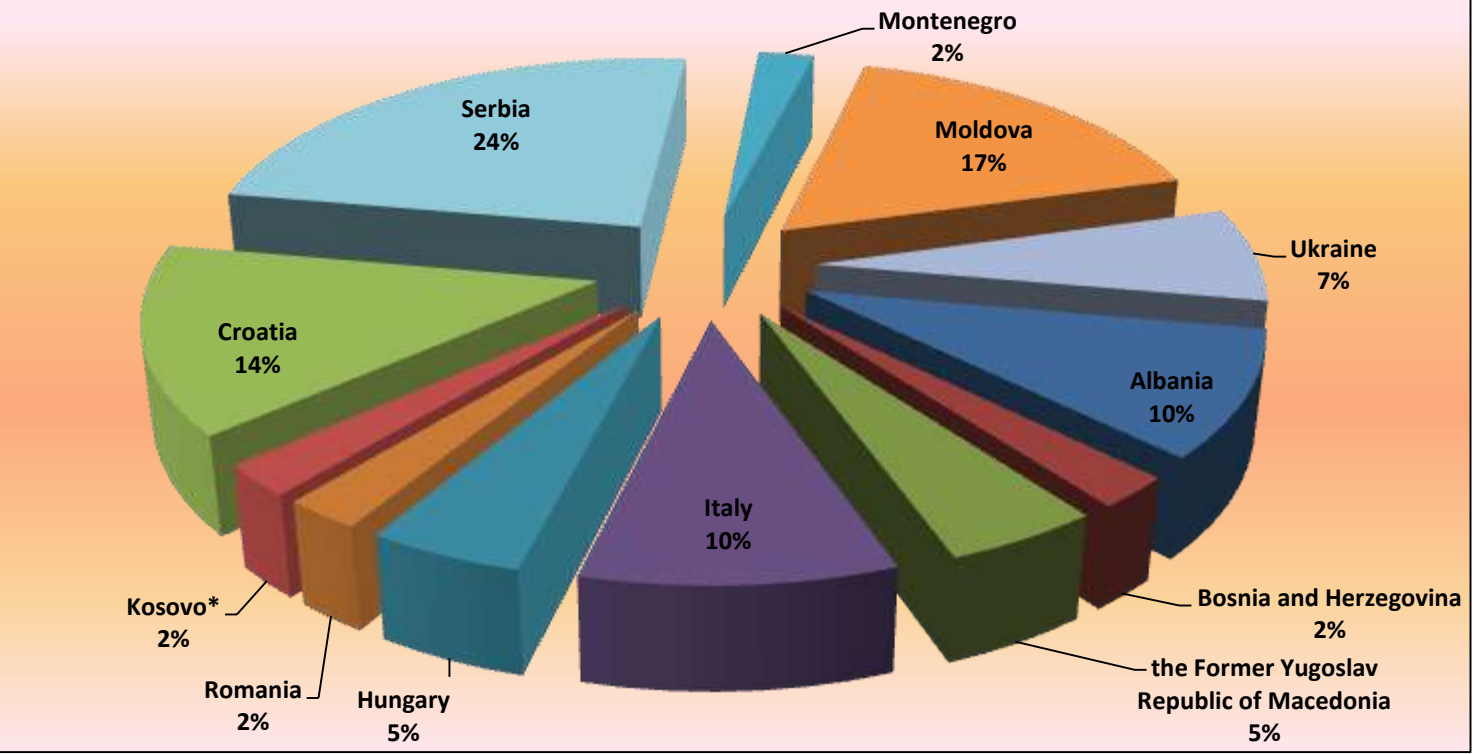
Q9: Which other topic(s) should have been addressed?

Q10: How could future Innovation Week be improved? Please share your suggestions, comments, ideas for the future. *(some replies)*

All participants

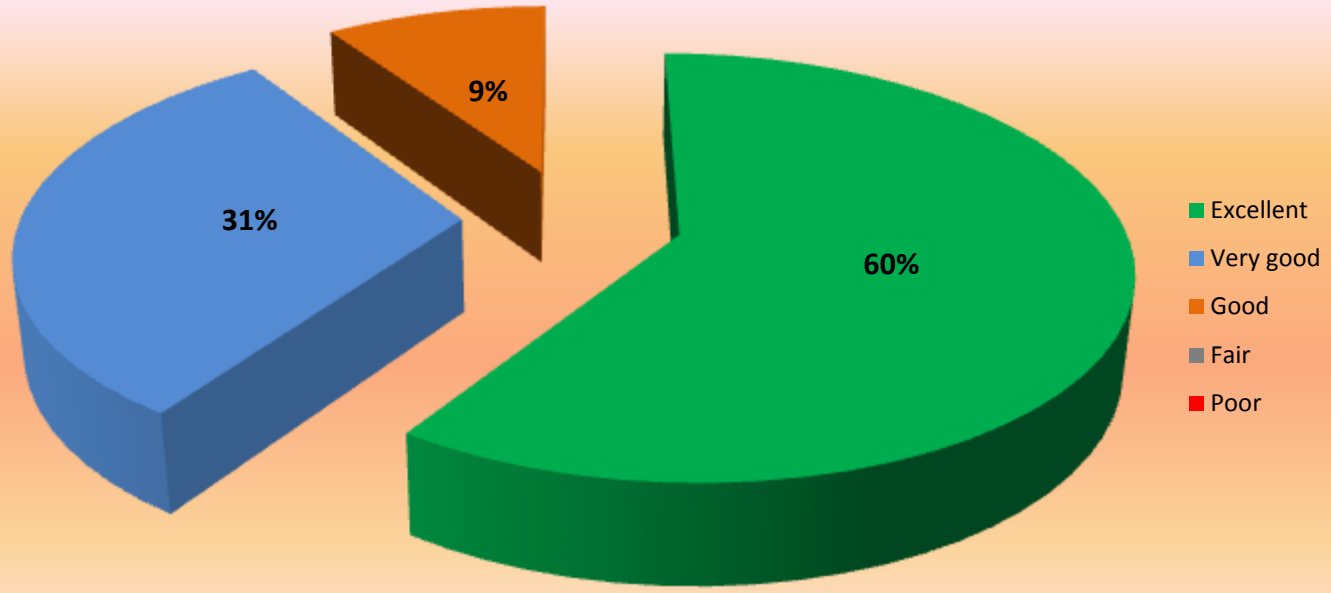


Q1: From which country do you come from? (questionnaire respondents)

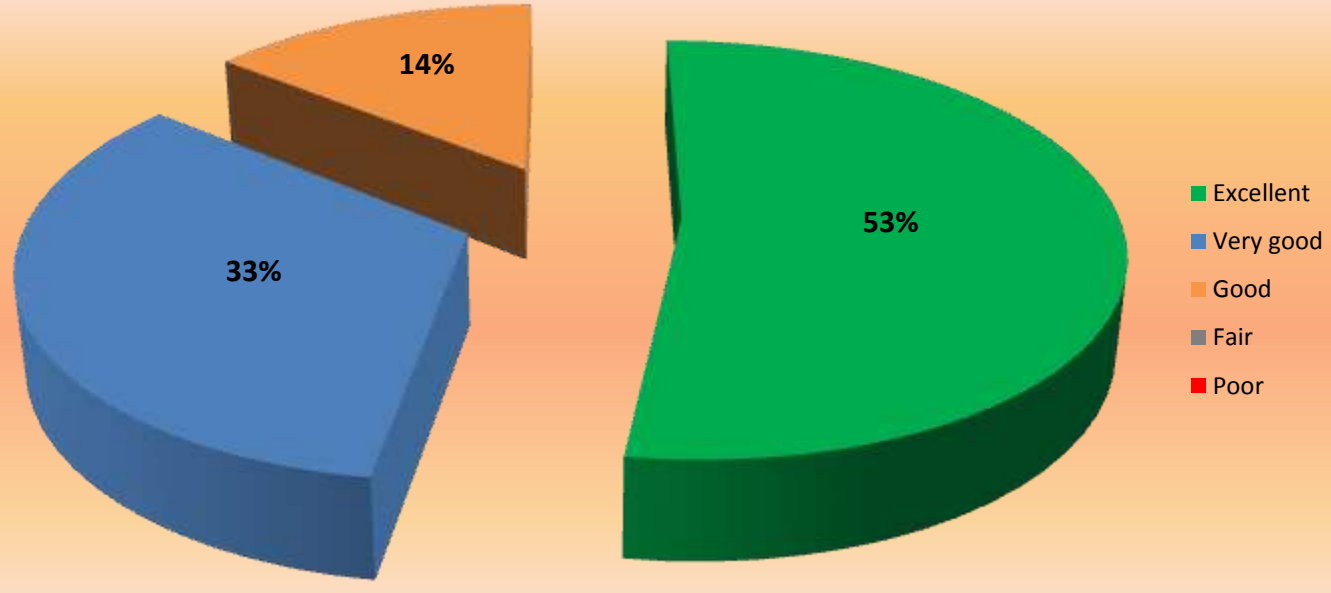


*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

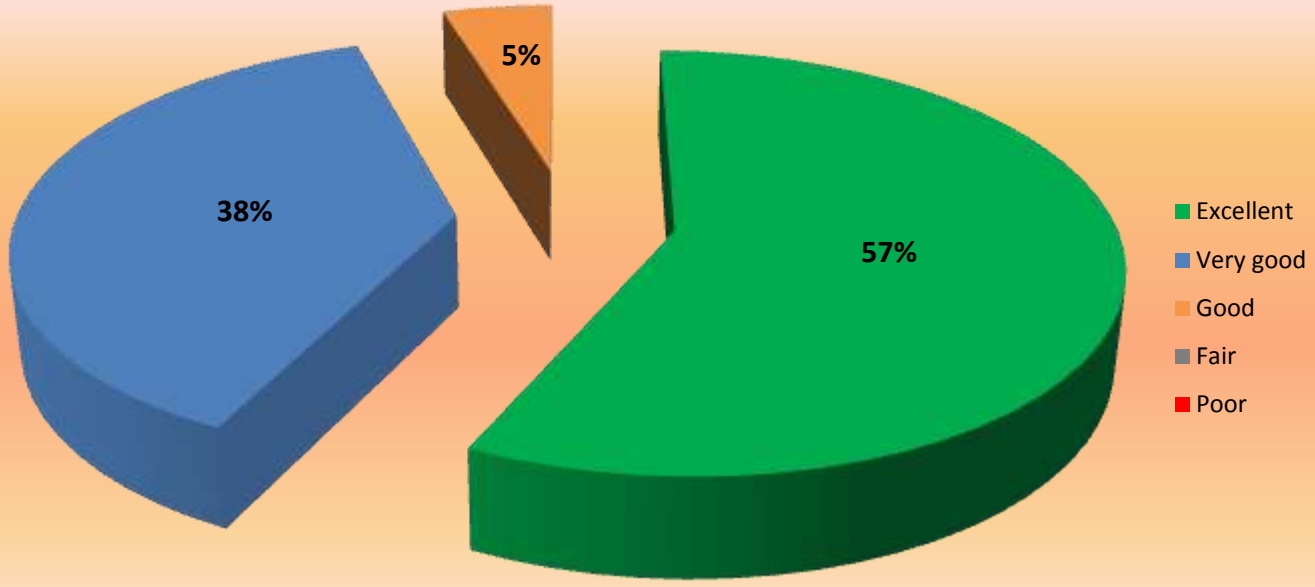
Q3: Overall, how would you rate the Innovation Week?



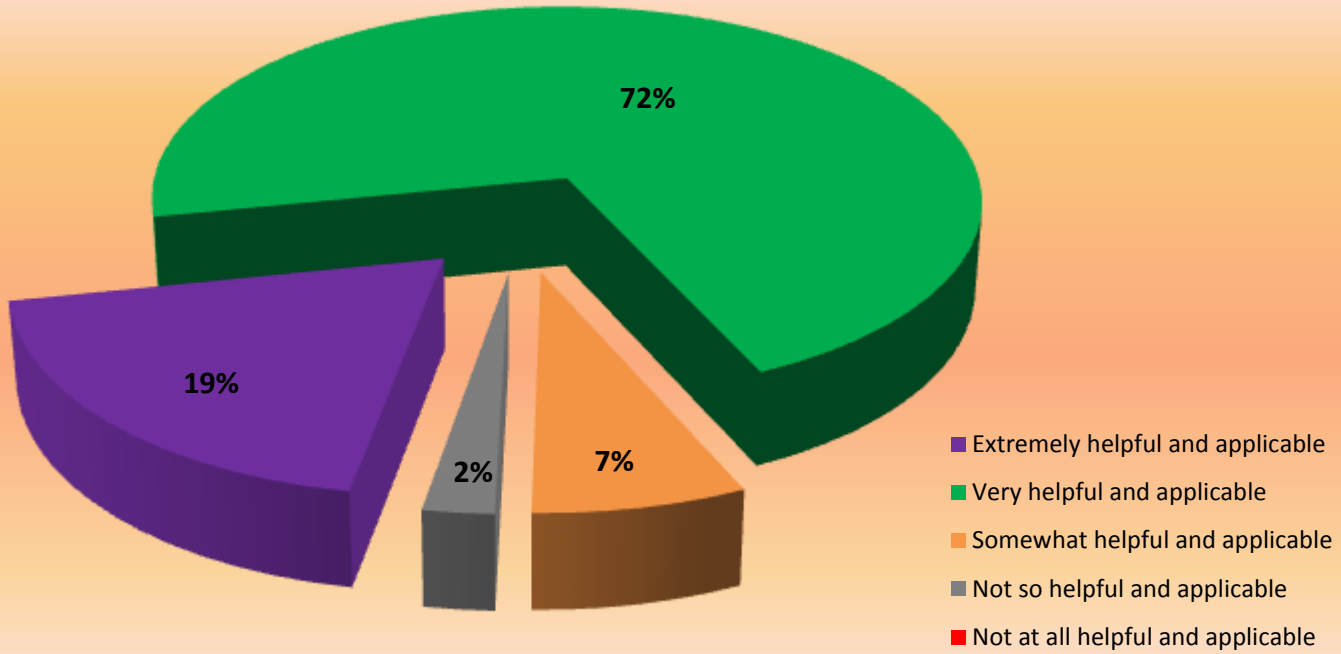
Q4: What is your opinion on the general organisation and the quality of the facilities of the Innovation Week?



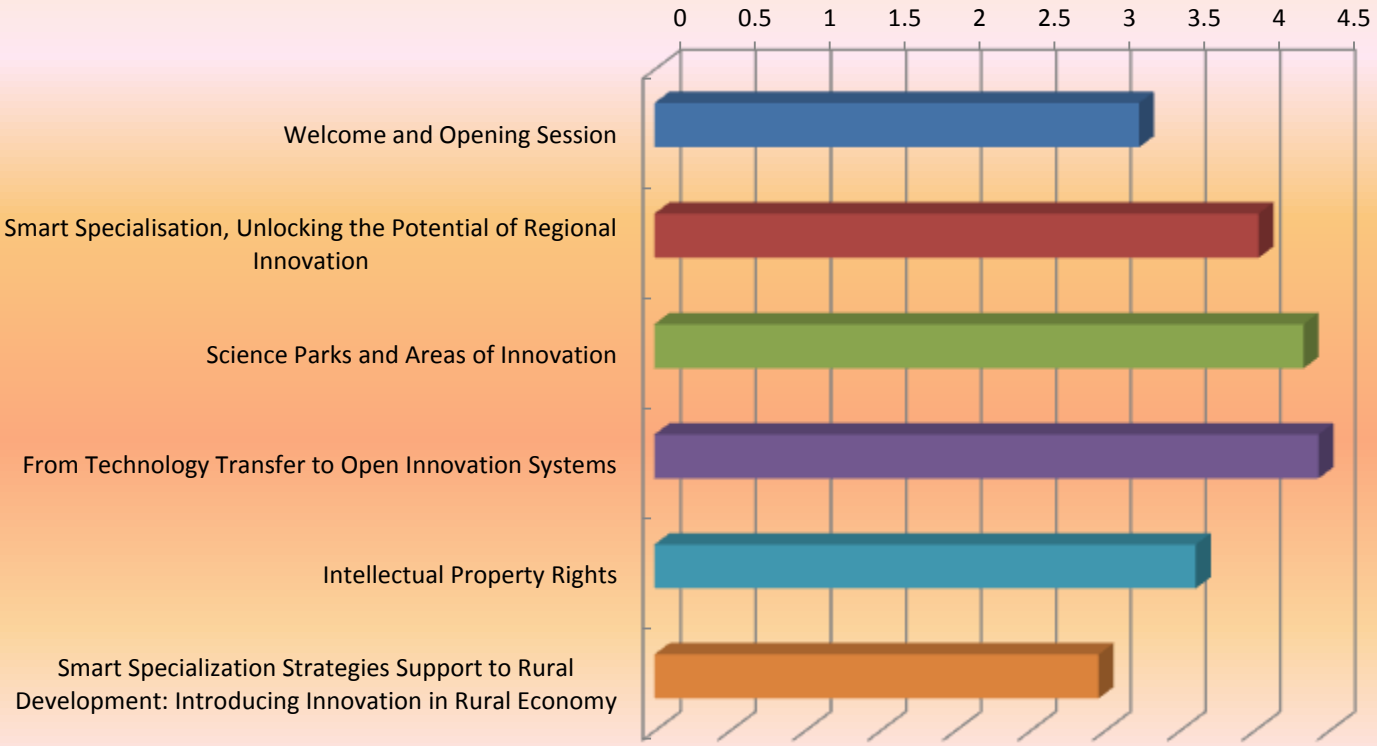
Q5: What do you think of the overall quality of the speakers?



Q6: How helpful and applicable to your job was the content presented at Innovation Week?



Q7: Interest for sessions



Q8: What was the single most valuable thing you learned at the Innovation Week?

- I got exposed to all the regional strategies and initiatives ongoing in the field of TTO and Innovation generally.
- If we have certain challenges and obstacles to reach the goal, they can be vanished by networking. The macro regional approach/idea can be used at any level from different university teams to different countries.
- The importance of innovation for economic development.
- Commercialisation of knowledge and technology is the future of the scientific research.
- Innovation needs communities and trust! Differences not averages move the world! Adapt and Adopt!
- New approach in directing the different steps of the encouragement, development and implementation of the innovative processes which I will be able to transfer to the stakeholders in my Institute.

Q9: Which other topic(s) should have been addressed?

- New approaches to the education and science financing; Financing programmes more detailed; Presentation of EU financial initiatives and support.
- Innovation potential of small and medium enterprises and the current situation in Central and Eastern Europe; How to start innovation process in less developed countries.
- Transnational and interregional projects' success stories within European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes.
- Details about the role of the Universities in the innovation process and know-how diffusion within Macro-regions.
- More study cases; I suggest you dedicate your next session to discussing some practical solutions to countries with transition economies: successful experiences in developing countries that facilitate the exchange of knowledge in the domains of strategies for the regions with financial problems and solidarity mechanisms to support these regions.
- Social and cultural aspects of technological innovations; Environmental and energy aspects in innovations.

Q10: How could a future Innovation Week be improved? Please share your suggestions, comments, ideas for the future.

- Innovation Week has to be organised in different Centres of Excellence in the Region. The researchers and others, working for innovation, should have access and opportunity to contribute with their best practices to spread innovation knowledge in the region. The funding facilities are very helpful for the participation of the researchers from the targeted regions.
- Handbook of participants with short CV to enhance future cooperation; This can be really useful to build a human connection between participants and give people a chance to discuss, to get to know each other; In addition to the programme and speakers brochure it is best to attach the participants list.
- A reactive webpage of participants to facilitate the knowledge flow; A platform which will connect all participants and stakeholders from this area. That will be one of the best ways for sharing and exchange knowledge, experience, good base for quicker, quality finding partners for projects.
- More practical workshops; More frequent events, diffused all over the Macro-regions.
- A session of B2B (business to business) meting; A B2B meeting, because this gives a better opportunity to build up partnerships.
- Little bit more about innovation in the education systems and their connections with the labour market.
- Including more scientists with experience in technology transfer; Invite some of the same participants as well as some new experts with experience in the field to increase some discussion even during coffee breaks.
- If some participants want to prepare a poster and present it as an exhibition, that could also support the network building. I liked very much the event, it was a brilliant idea.

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